

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed September 20, 2004 ("Office Action"). Claims 1-40 are pending in the Application. The Examiner rejects Claims 1-3, 9-11, 17-19, 25-27, and 33-35 and objects to Claims 4-8, 12-16, 20-24, 28-32, and 36-40. Applicant amends Claims 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 25, 32, 33, and 40 and cancels Claims 4, 12, 20, 21, 28, 29, 36, and 37 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Objections to the Specification

The Examiner objects to typographical errors in the disclosure. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the attention to detail and has amended the disclosure to fix the typographical errors.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objects to typographical errors in Claims 6, 7, 9-16, 17-24, 25-32, and 40. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the attention to detail and has amended these claims to fix the typographical errors.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objects to Claims 4-8, 12-16, 20-24, 28-32, and 36-40 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicates that each of these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the respective base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the timely and favorable consideration of these claims.

In order to hasten issuance of currently allowed subject matter, Applicant amends Claims 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 25, and 33 as independent claims, each including limitations that the Examiner has indicated as allowable subject matter. All other claims depend from these independent claims. Therefore, all claims are in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-3 and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on various combinations of references. As noted above, Applicant has placed all claims in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications. While Applicant believes all independent claims as originally filed to be in condition for allowance in view of the cited art, Applicant amends these claims to hasten issuance of currently allowed subject matter. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of the original claims in continuations or other applications without prejudice or disclaimer.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place the Application in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully requests full allowance of all pending claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of the Application in any manner, the undersigned Attorney for Applicant stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

An additional filing fee of \$400.00 is due to cover for two additional independent claims and a check in that amount is enclosed herewith. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any extra fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicant



Kurt M. Pankratz
Reg. No. 46,977

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Correspondence Address

Customer ID No. **05073**